



Howdens Joinery was founded in 1995 in order to serve the needs of small builders undertaking routine joinery and kitchen installation work. By 2009 it had become one of the UK's leading suppliers of kitchens and joinery products to the trade. Howdens has achieved this by creating a strong entrepreneurial culture within its depots, a close relationship with its customers and a range of kitchens specifically designed to meet the needs of modern living.



**Market**

Howdens operates within the trade or 'done for you' kitchen market, its core customer base comprising local builders and skilled professionals. The company has always believed that project management by the local builder is the best solution for installing a kitchen; it has experience in bringing together products, services and local trades in order to deliver a project on time, on budget and to a high standard. The introduction of additional legislation governing materials and services, combined with increasingly 'cash rich, time poor' and design-savvy end-users, has seen this market grow dramatically.

Howdens helps builders to manage their businesses by guaranteeing product availability from local stock with rigid cabinets that are

ready to install, saving builders time and money as well as allowing them to plan effectively. Its versatile and scalable supply chain ensures its depots, and in turn the customer, receive a high level of service. Specifically within the trade sector, key competitors are Jewson, Travis Perkins, Magnet Trade and Benchmark.

**Product**

Howdens sells kitchens – encompassing appliances, accessories, handles, worktops, sinks and taps – and joinery, such as doors, flooring, stairs and hardware. A free survey and Computer Aided Design (CAD) service, which includes a site visit, is also available. The company has the UK's largest kitchen range available from stock and ensures its portfolio remains informed by new product development. As all depots hold stock locally

they are also able to offer local delivery when and where required.

**Achievements**

Since it was established in 1995, Howdens has demonstrated strong growth with a turnover exceeding £750 million in 2009. In 15 years it has expanded from 14 depots to more than 460, supplying 234,000 building trade professionals as well as over 300 local authorities and housing associations with around 400,000 complete kitchens each year. In 2003 Howdens also set up Houdan Menuiseries in France with a further 11 depots.

In September 2007, a partnership between Howdens Joinery and Leonard Cheshire Disability was named 'Best Corporate Partnership' at the Third Sector Excellence



Awards. The research partnership aims to develop affordable, attractive and practical kitchen products for people with physical disabilities. In 2007, six kitchen activity centres were created, donated and installed in Leonard Cheshire homes across the UK. It is an area with significant potential for ongoing product development and both Howdens and Leonard Cheshire Disability are committed to building their relationship in order to further benefit local communities. In addition, Howdens has developed a highly accessible kitchen collection called 'Inclusive Kitchens', which is sold through its depots.

**Recent Developments**

Since the autumn of 2007, Howdens has operated two mobile display vehicles, which highlight products aimed at the social housing market and showcase new products. The trailers are able to travel to depots and customers' premises to create maximum impact and support localised marketing activities. In addition, the company's fleet of more than 400 delivery trailers has been rebranded to create further brand awareness.



Howdens has been awarded FSC and PEFC chain of custody certificates for a number of joinery products and a selection of its kitchen ranges. It will continue to strive for certification on additional ranges and products.

Product development remains key to the company in order to ensure its continued growth. By offering products that are both affordable and in line with the latest design trends for the home, Howdens aims to meet changing market needs head on.

As consumers become ever more design conscious, increased emphasis is placed on building brand awareness further, so that the Howdens name is recognised and recommended not only by builders but also by end-users themselves.

**Promotion**

Howdens puts the relationship between local depots and builders at the heart of its promotional strategy. As such its kitchen and joinery brochures, alongside other literature, are specifically designed to help builders in discussion with their own customers. Local marketing is key and the depots tailor their promotional activity to meet customer needs. Many depots also provide donations to local charities and community projects, including sponsorship of grassroots football and rugby teams.

More recently, Howdens has developed a website to showcase the company and its

complete range of products, and for the first time in its history, in 2008 began to undertake consumer and trade advertising campaigns. These ventures have been carefully considered to raise brand awareness and help the local depot and local builder in selling Howdens products to end-users.

In 2009, Howdens introduced a series of Truly Local books, published quarterly, to tell the stories behind their customer relationships and to show how the business is an integral part of the local community.

**Brand Values**

Howdens is guided by the aim of providing small builders with kitchen and joinery products of the highest quality, at the best price and from local stock. The company attributes its success to the strength of the depots' relationships with their customers and the breadth of the market they serve; the quality and range of Howdens products; the ability to service customers from local stock; and the opportunity to streamline the business around supplying one customer, the small builder.

[howdens.com](http://howdens.com)

**Things you didn't know about Howdens Joinery**

Howdens sells 400,000 complete kitchens every year.

Four million kitchen cabinets are manufactured annually by Howdens.

Howdens prints more than 1.5 million kitchen brochures each year.

Howdens makes charitable donations to over 1,500 good causes each year.

| 1995  | 1999   | 2002                                   | 2003                                   | 2004  |
|---|--|--|--|---|
| Howdens Joinery starts trading in October with 14 depots, supplying trade professionals locally from stock. | The depots stock joinery, hardware and 11 kitchen ranges, plus appliances, sinks and taps, worktops and accessories. | Howdens Joinery opens its 100th depot. | Howdens Joinery opens its 250th depot. | Howdens Joinery opens 11 depots in France under the name Houdan Menuiseries.  |
|   |  |  |  | Howdens Joinery sets the standard in the trade kitchen market with its new format high quality Kitchen Brochure. The partnership with Howdens and Leonard Cheshire is formed. |

| 2006  | 2007  | 2008  | 2009  |
|---|---|---|---|
| Howdens Joinery launches a market leading Joinery Brochure featuring doors, joinery and flooring. | The Howdens website launches in April. A mobile Contract trailer launches to assist the depots in promoting their products and services. The 400th depot opens. | The first Howdens Joinery branded delivery trailers go on the road. The first consumer and trade advertising campaign launches. | The Lamona brand of appliances, sinks and taps launches, which is exclusive to Howdens Joinery. There are 462 depots across the UK supplying over 40 kitchen ranges from stock. |